IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims. This listing replaces all earlier versions and listings of the claims.

Claim 1 (currently amended): A service management apparatus for use in a network system capable of providing various services dispersed in plural apparatuses, [[for]] managing [[the]] service information [[on]] of the various services present on [[said]] the network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, the service management apparatus comprising:

test means for executing a process of a trial use of the service one of the various services provided by said apparatus;

evaluation means for evaluating the quality of [[said]] the service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed by said test means; and

renewal means for renewing the managed service information based on the evaluated quality evaluated by said evaluation means.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A service management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said evaluation means evaluates the result of the trial use of the service executed by said test means by a predetermined evaluation function.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A service management apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said renewal means deletes the managed service information in a case

the evaluation by [[said]] the predetermined evaluation function does not meet a

predetermined reference.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A service management apparatus according

to claim 2, wherein [[said]] the predetermined evaluation function evaluates the quality of

the service based on the time required for calling the service.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A service management apparatus according

to claim 2, wherein [[said]] the predetermined evaluation function evaluates the quality of

the service based on [[the]] an error frequency of error generated by [[the]] a service

calling.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A service management apparatus according

to claim 1, wherein:

said test means executes an access process for writing and reading

data on a trial basis for a storage service; and

said evaluation means evaluates the quality of [[said]] the storage

service based on the result of [[said]] the access process performed by said test means.

Claim 7 (original): A service management apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein said evaluation means detects the number of colors or recording sheets available in

the service and evaluates the quality of the service based on the number of colors or

recording sheets available in the service.

Claim 8 (original): A service management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the plural apparatuses include a printer.

Claim 9 (currently amended): An apparatus connected to a service management apparatus for managing [[the]] service information ~~on the~~ of various services present on a network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said apparatus comprising:

test means for executing a process of a trial use of [[the]] a service of another apparatus belonging to a same group as that of said apparatus;

evaluation means for evaluating the quality of [[said]] the service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed by said test means; and

deletion means for instructing, in a case the ~~evaluated~~ quality evaluated by said evaluation means does not meet a predetermined reference, [[said]] the service management apparatus to delete the service information from [[said]] the service management apparatus.

Claim 10 (currently amended): An apparatus connected to a service management apparatus for managing [[the]] service information ~~on the~~ of various services present on a network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said apparatus comprising:

test means for executing a process of the trial use of [[the]] a service of another apparatus belonging to a same group as that of said apparatus;

evaluation means for evaluating the quality of [[said]] the service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed by said test means; and

substitution means for instructing, in a case the evaluated quality evaluated by said evaluation means does not meet a predetermined reference, [[said]] the service management apparatus to substitute the service provided by [[said]] the another apparatus with a service provided by said apparatus.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A service management method for use in a network system capable of providing various services dispersed in plural apparatuses, [[for]] managing [[the]] service information [[on]] of the various services present on [[said]] the network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, the service management method comprising:

a test step of executing a process of a trial use of the service one of the various services provided by said service management method;

an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] the service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed in said test step; and

a renewal step of renewing the managed service information based on the evaluated quality evaluated in said evaluation step.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A service management method according to claim 11, wherein said evaluation step evaluates includes evaluating the result of the trial use of the service executed in said test step by a predetermined evaluation function.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A service management method according to claim 12, wherein said renewal step ~~deletes~~ includes deleting the managed service information in a case the evaluation by [[said]] the predetermined evaluation function does not meet a predetermined reference.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A service management method according to claim 12, wherein [[said]] the predetermined evaluation function evaluates the quality of the service based on the time required for calling the service.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A service management method according to claim 12, wherein [[said]] the predetermined evaluation function evaluates the quality of the service based on [[the]] an error frequency ~~of error~~ generated by [[the]] a service calling.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A service management method according to claim 11, wherein:

said test step ~~executes~~ includes executing an access process for writing and reading data on trial basis for a storage service; and

said evaluation step ~~evaluates~~ includes evaluating the quality of [[said]] the storage service based on the result of [[said]] the access process performed in said test step.

Claim 17 (currently amended): A service management method according to claim 11, wherein said evaluation step ~~detects~~ includes detecting the number of colors or recording sheets available in the service and ~~evaluates~~ evaluating the quality of the service based on the number of colors or recording sheets available in the service.

Claim 18 (original): A service management method according to claim 11, wherein the plural apparatuses include a printer.

Claim 19 (currently amended): A method for use in an apparatus connected to a service management apparatus for managing [[the]] service information ~~on the~~ of various services present on a network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said method comprising:

a test step of executing a process of a trial use of [[the]]a service of another apparatus belonging to a same group as that of the apparatus;

an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] the service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed in said test step; and

a deletion step of instructing, in a case the ~~evaluated~~ quality evaluated in said evaluation step does not meet a predetermined reference, [[said]] the service management apparatus to delete the service information from [[said]] the service management apparatus.

Claim 20 (currently amended): A method for use in an apparatus connected to a service management apparatus for managing [[the]] service information ~~on the~~ of various services present on a network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said method comprising:

a test step of executing a process of a trial use of [[the]] a service of another apparatus belonging to a same group as that of said apparatus;

an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] the service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed in said test step; and

a substitution step of instructing, in a case the ~~evaluated~~ quality evaluated in said evaluation step does not meet a predetermined reference, [[said]] the service management apparatus to substitute the service provided by [[said]] the another apparatus with a service provided by [[said]] the apparatus.

Claim 21 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium storing a program for executing a service management method for use in a network system capable of providing various services dispersed in plural apparatuses, [[for]] managing [[the]] service information ~~on the~~ of various services present on [[said]] the network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said program comprising:

code for a test step of executing a process of a trial use of ~~the service~~ one of the various services provided by the service management method;

code for an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] the

service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed by said code for a

test step; and

code for a renewal step of renewing the managed service

information based on the evaluated quality evaluated by said code for an evaluation step.

Claim 22 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program for a service management method according to claim 21, wherein said

code for an evaluation step evaluates the result of the trial use of the service by a

predetermined evaluation function executed by said code for a test step.

Claim 23 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program for a service management method according to claim 22, wherein said

code for a renewal step deletes the managed service information in a case the evaluation

by [[said]] the predetermined evaluation function does not meet a predetermined reference.

Claim 24 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program for a service management method according to claim 22, wherein

[[said]] the predetermined evaluation function evaluates the quality of the service based on

the time required for calling the service.

Claim 25 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program for a service management method according to claim 22, wherein

[[said]] the predetermined evaluation function evaluates the quality of the service based on

[[the]] an error frequency of error generated by [[the]] a service calling.

Claim 26 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program for a service management method according to claim 21, wherein:

said code for a test step executes an access process for writing and

reading data on trial basis for a storage service; and

said code for an evaluation step evaluates the quality of [[said]] the

storage service based on the result of [[said]] the access process performed by said code for

a test step.

Claim 27 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program for a service management method according to claim 21, wherein said

code for an evaluation step detects the number of colors or recording sheets available in the

service and evaluates the quality of the service based on the number of colors or recording

sheets available in the service.

Claim 28 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program for a service management method according to claim 21, wherein the

plural apparatuses include a printer.

Claim 29 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program [[for]] executing a method for use in an apparatus connected to a service

management apparatus for managing [[the]] service information on the of various services

present on a network system and transferring the managed service information in response

to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said program comprising:

code for a test step of executing a process of a trial use of [[the]]a

service of another apparatus belonging to a same group as that of the apparatus;

code for an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] the

service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed by said code for a

test step; and

code for a deletion step of instructing, in a case the evaluated quality

evaluated by said code for an evaluation step does not meet a predetermined reference,

[[said]] the service management apparatus to delete the service information from [[said]]

the service management apparatus.

Claim 30 (currently amended): A computer readable storage medium

storing a program [[for]] executing a method for use in an apparatus connected to a service

management apparatus for managing [[the]] service information on the of various services

present on a network system and transferring the managed service information in response

to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said program comprising:

code for a test step of executing a process of a trial use of [[the]] a

service of another apparatus belonging to a same group as that of the apparatus;

code for an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] the

service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed by said code for a

test step; and

code for a substitution step of instructing, in a case the ~~evaluated~~ quality evaluated by said code for an evaluation step does not meet a predetermined reference, [[said]] the service management apparatus to substitute the service provided by [[said]] the another apparatus with a service provided by [[said]] the apparatus.

Claim 31 (currently amended): A computer program [[for]] executing a service management method for use in a network system capable of providing various services dispersed in plural apparatuses, [[for]] managing [[the]] service information ~~on the~~ of various services present on [[said]] the network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said program comprising:

code for a test step of executing a process of a trial use of ~~the service~~ one f the various services provided by the service management method;

code for an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] the service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed by said code for a test step; and

code for a renewal step of renewing the managed service information based on the ~~evaluated~~ quality evaluated by said code for an evaluation step.

Claim 32 (currently amended): A computer program ~~for a service management method~~ according to claim 31, wherein said code for an evaluation step evaluates the result of the trial use of the service executed by said code for a test step by a predetermined evaluation function.

Claim 33 (currently amended): A computer program ~~for a service management method~~ according to claim 32, wherein said <u>code for a</u> renewal step deletes the managed service information in <u>a</u> case the evaluation by [[said]] <u>the predetermined</u> evaluation function does not meet a predetermined reference.

Claim 34 (currently amended): A computer program ~~for a service management method~~ according to claim 32, wherein [[said]] <u>the predetermined</u> evaluation function evaluates the quality <u>of the service</u> based on the time required for calling the service.

Claim 35 (currently amended): A computer program ~~for a service management method~~ according to claim 32, wherein [[said]] <u>the predetermined</u> evaluation function evaluates the quality <u>of the service</u> based on [[the]] <u>an error</u> frequency ~~of error~~ generated by [[the]] <u>a</u> service calling.

Claim 36 (currently amended): A computer program ~~for a service management method~~ according to claim 31, wherein:

said <u>code for a</u> test step executes an access process for writing and reading data on trial basis for a storage service; and

said <u>code for an</u> evaluation step evaluates the quality of [[said]] <u>the</u> storage service based on the result of [[said]] <u>the</u> access process <u>performed by said code for a test step</u>.

Claim 37 (currently amended): A computer program ~~for a service management method~~ according to claim 31, wherein said <u>code for an</u> evaluation step detects the number of colors or recording sheets available in the service and evaluates the quality <u>of the service</u> based on the number of colors or recording sheets available in the service.

Claim 38 (currently amended): A computer program ~~for a service management method~~ according to claim 31, wherein the plural apparatuses include a printer.

Claim 39 (currently amended): A computer program [[for]] <u>executing</u> a method for use in an apparatus connected to a service management apparatus for managing [[the]] service information ~~on the~~ <u>of</u> various services present on a network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] <u>said</u> program comprising:

        <u>code for</u> a test step of executing a process of <u>a</u> trial use of [[the]]<u>a</u> service of another apparatus belonging to a same group <u>as that of the apparatus</u>;

        <u>code for</u> an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] <u>the</u> service, based on [[the]] <u>a</u> result of the trial use of the service <u>executed by said code for a test step</u>; and

        <u>code for</u> a deletion step of instructing, in <u>a</u> case the ~~evaluated~~ quality <u>evaluated by said code for an evaluation step</u> does not meet a predetermined reference,

[[said]] the service management apparatus to delete the service information from [[said]] the service management apparatus.

Claim 40 (currently amended): A computer program [[for]] executing a method for use in an apparatus connected to a service management apparatus for managing [[the]] service information on the of various services present on a network system and transferring the managed service information in response to a request from an external apparatus, [[the]] said program comprising:

code for a test step of executing a process of a trial use of [[the]] a service of another apparatus belonging to a same group as that of the apparatus;

code for an evaluation step of evaluating the quality of [[said]] the service, based on [[the]] a result of the trial use of the service executed by said code for a test step; and

code for a substitution step of instructing, in a case the evaluated quality evaluated by said code for an evaluation step does not meet a predetermined reference, [[said]] the service management apparatus to substitute the service provided by [[said]] the another apparatus with a service provided by [[said]] the apparatus.